

ARSON REWARD

9482

(February 2002)

A reward may be given in recognition for performing a public service. Reward programs encourage some persons to come forward with information that might not otherwise be available to investigators. Reward programs are also believed to help reduce the incidence of certain types of crime by virtue of their educational and deterrent qualities. It is important to the people of the State of California that an arsonist be quickly identified and apprehended to prevent further threat to both life and property. Arson is among the most serious crimes against property in the nation.

STATE RESPONSIBILITY FIRES

9482.1

(February 2002)

Private citizens providing information regarding fires that occur on, or adjacent to and threaten, State Responsibility Areas are eligible to receive rewards paid from the Emergency Fund. Reward requests can be initiated by the private citizens or by Department employees.

AUTHORITY

9482.1.1

(February 2002)

The Department is authorized by PRC 4417 to offer and pay a reward.

CONFIDENTIALITY

9482.1.2

(February 2002)

All matters pertaining to the application for or the payment of this reward are confidential. Until the applicant or recipient has given written permission to the contrary, their name or other identifying information will not be a public record and shall remain confidential. PRC Section 4417 specifically authorizes the Department to preserve the anonymity of a recipient.

PUBLICITY

9482.1.3

(February 2002)

As some recipients of rewards do not want any publicity, an understanding should be reached with each prospective recipient as to their desires. The decision should rest with the recipient, and CDF personnel should be cautioned against bringing pressure upon anyone to obtain agreement to publicity in a particular case. The prime consideration should be the desires and welfare of the informant.

General information to the press that rewards are paid for help in convicting arsonists may be as effective as publicity regarding a specific recipient. Many prospective recipients are fearful of retaliation--a fear that is not without foundation. In any event, if a person agrees to publicity, they should have a clear understanding of what publicity is planned and their consent to the specific type of publicity planned should be obtained in writing in advance of any release of information.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

9482.1.4

(February 2002)

Each request (application) for payment of a reward will be submitted to the Deputy Chief of Law Enforcement using the following procedure. The CDF employee in charge of the criminal investigation (investigating officer) will prepare a statement which shall contain at least the following information:

- The name, age, social security number, and address of the applicant.
- The applicant's occupation and employer's name, address, and telephone number, if employed.
- The connection or relationship of the applicant with the convicted person, if any.
- A brief resume of the information received from the applicant and how this information was used to bring about the arrest and conviction or commitment of the fire setter.
 - Where more than one applicant may have been equally helpful in a successful prosecution, the investigating officer will determine the degree of assistance of each and recommend the amount that each should receive. It is possible that one reward could be split between two or more applicants.
- A statement setting forth the charges filed, names of the court and judge involved, date of conviction, and charges upon which the defendant was convicted. If defendant was not convicted but was committed to a public facility, provide the names of the court and judge in which the case was heard. Include terms of the commitment order.
- A letter from the prosecuting attorney or the court outlining the applicant's role and their importance to the case.

The investigating officer will submit the completed package to the Unit Chief for review, approval, and submission by the Unit Chief to the Region Chief.

Upon receipt of the application package, the Region Chief will affix recommendations and forward the entire package to the Department Headquarters, marked Personal & Confidential (Attention: Deputy Chief of Law Enforcement).

LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY FIRES

9482.2

(February 2002)

Private citizens can be encouraged to provide information regarding arson fires and other related crimes that occur on both State Responsibility and Local Responsibility Areas. The offering of rewards for these occurrences must be through the Governor's Reward Program. Prior approval to offer a reward must be obtained from the Governor's Office.

AUTHORITY

9482.2.1

(February 2002)

Penal Code 1537 authorizes the Governor to offer a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person responsible for the crime.

REQUEST FOR GOVERNOR'S REWARD

9482.2.2

(February 2002)

Use of the Governor's Reward Program is only available on an Incident-by-Incident basis. A General or Standing Reward is NOT available. The program can only be used for specific crimes and must be justified and approved by the Governor's Office prior to making any reward offer to the public.

Departmental generated requests must originate within the Unit where the incident has occurred. PC 1537 should be reviewed for the appropriate subsection that would apply to the particular incident. Full justification for the use of the Governor's Reward Program must be included within the Executive Summary, include any media coverage and the current lack of witnesses. As these incidents relate to a crime, the cooperation of the local Chief of Police or County Sheriff, might be required as part of the request package. All requests must be approved by the Unit Chief, in writing, and forwarded to the Region Chief. Upon approval of the Region Chief, the request must be submitted to the Director's Office for submission, through the Department's Office of Legislation, Resources Agency, and to the Governor's Office.

Non-Departmental requests may be initiated by local law enforcement agencies or political subdivisions. Any CDF involvement in these requests must be minimized and knowledge of the pending request must be provided through channels to the Director's Office.

CONFIDENTIALITY

9482.2.3

(February 2002)

All matters pertaining to the application for or the payment of this reward may be confidential. PC 1537 allows for the preservation of a recipient's anonymity under certain circumstances.

PUBLICITY

9482.2.4

(February 2002)

As some recipients of rewards do not want any publicity, an understanding should be reached with each prospective recipient as to their desires. The decision should rest with the recipient, and CDF personnel should be cautioned against bringing pressure upon anyone to obtain agreement to publicity in a particular case. The prime consideration should be the desires and welfare of the informant.

General information to the press that rewards are paid for help in convicting arsonists may be as effective as publicity regarding a specific recipient. Many prospective recipients are fearful of retaliation--a fear that is not without foundation. In any event, if a person agrees to publicity, they should have a clear understanding of what publicity is planned and their consent to the specific type of publicity planned should be obtained in writing in advance of any release of information.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

9482.2.5

(February 2002)

Each request (application) for payment of a reward will be submitted to the Deputy Chief of Law Enforcement using the following procedure. The CDF employee in charge of the criminal investigation (investigating officer) will prepare a statement which shall contain at least the following information:

- The name, age, social security number, and address of the applicant.
- The applicant's occupation and employer's name, address, and telephone number, if employed.
- The connection or relationship of the applicant with the convicted person, if any.

- A brief resume of the information received from the applicant and how this information was used to bring about the arrest and conviction or commitment of the fire setter.
 - Where more than one applicant may have been equally helpful in a successful prosecution, the investigating officer will determine the degree of assistance of each and recommend the amount that each should receive. It is possible that one reward could be split between two or more applicants.
- A statement setting forth the charges filed, names of the court and judge involved, date of conviction, and charges upon which the defendant was convicted. If defendant was not convicted but was committed to a public facility, provide the names of the court and judge in which the case was heard. Include terms of the commitment order.
- A letter from the prosecuting attorney or the court outlining the applicant's role and their importance to the case.

The investigating officer will submit the completed package to the Unit Chief for review, approval, and submission by the Unit Chief to the Region Chief.

Upon receipt of the application package, the Region Chief will affix recommendations and forward the entire package to the Department Headquarters, marked Personal & Confidential (Attention: Deputy Chief of Law Enforcement).

[\(see next section\)](#)

[\(see HB Table of Contents\)](#)

[\(see Forms or Forms Samples\)](#)